

# **William Conner papers**

## **S291**

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This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

October 01, 2014

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Rare Books and Manuscripts  
140 North Senate Avenue  
Indianapolis, Indiana, 46204  
317-232-3671

## Table of Contents

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<u>Summary Information</u> .....	3
<u>Biographical Note</u> .....	4
<u>Scope and Contents</u> .....	5
<u>Arrangement</u> .....	5
<u>Administrative Information</u> .....	5
<u>Controlled Access Headings</u> .....	6

## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Rare Books and Manuscripts
<b>Title</b>	William Conner papers
<b>Date</b>	1812-1824
<b>Extent</b>	0.01 Cubic feet 1 folder
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Text [Folder]</b>	S291

### Preferred Citation

William Conner papers, Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library

## Biographical Note

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William H. Conner was born December 10, 1777 in Ohio, in the Moravian missionary village of Lichtenau, to Richard and Margaret (Boyer) Conner. His mother had been a captive of the Shawnee Indians and was ransomed for \$200.00 and the promise to give her first born son to the Shawnees, James, whom they did but were later able to ransom back to his birth family. He and his family were moved by British troupes to Detroit where they spent the later years of the American Revolution. He and his brother John (1775-1826) first settled along the White River in 1800, south of present day Noblesville and worked as fur traders and interpreters, having lived among Indians growing up. He served in the militia in Indiana in 1812-1813. Sources disagree as to whether he legally married a Lenape/Delaware Indian, Mekingis, daughter of Chief William Anderson, with whom he had 6 children. He also served as a scout and interpreter for General William Henry Harrison. He established early trade routes through Indiana Territory to the Ohio River. In 1820, the Lenape/Delaware Indians, including his wife and six children, left Indiana.

Like many other white pioneers, he lived in both the Indian and white worlds. Three months after his Indian family left Indiana, he married his second wife, a white woman named Elizabeth Chapman, 18 years of age, with whom he had ten children. The commissioners who selected Indianapolis as the 2nd state capitol in 1820, first met in his trading post. In 1823, he built a brick mansion on a hill overlooking a flood plain, now known as Conner's Prairie, which was also the site of the first local post office. He held several Hamilton county offices and served in the General Assembly, 1829-1830, 1831-1832, and 1836-1837 (his brother John, nephew William Winship and son Alexander Hamilton also served). He continued to work with Indian treaties and serve as an interpreter. He moved his family to Noblesville in 1837. He was very successful in business and real estate, platting Noblesville and Strawtown in Hamilton County and Alexandria in Madison County. He was a founding member of the Indiana Historical Society but was not active in the organization. He died August 28, 1855 and is buried in the Crownland Cemetery, Noblesville, Indiana.

"Conner Prairie". Retrieved 2014/09/17. <http://www.connerprairie.org/About-Us>

"Conner, William". (1980). In *A biographical directory of the Indiana General Assembly* . (v.1, p. 76). Indianapolis, IN: Indiana Historical Bureau ISLI 920 B15G

"Conner, William". Find a Grave Memorial. Retrieved 2014/09/22. <http://www.findagrave.com>

Cox, Stephen L. and Timothy Cumrin (eds.). (1993). *Walking the knife-edged path: The William Conner Story*. In *Building a home: Preserving a heritage*. (ch. I). Fishers, IN: Conner Prairie. ISLI 977.201 H222ZFB

Vanderstel, David G. (1994). Conner, William. In *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*. (p. 471). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. ISLI 977.201 M341Ien

## Scope and Contents

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This collection includes typed information from Indiana Territory, War of 1812 records in Indiana ranging from 1812 to 1813 regarding pay and duty, a typed carbon listing of Indiana newspaper references to William Conner from 1822 to 1842, and a typed excerpt from the C.C. Trowbridge papers in 1823 regarding his trip to Indiana and meeting with William Conner and Capt. Pipe.

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## Arrangement

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This collection is arranged chronologically.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

Rare Books and Manuscripts

### Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

### Conditions Governing Use

Legal title, copyright, and literary rights reside with Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, IN. All requests to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted to Rare Books and Manuscripts.

### Custodial History

This collection was received by Rare Books and Manuscripts as a donation from Detroit Public Library on 1934/10/16.

### Accruals

No further additions are expected.

## **Processing Information**

Collection processing completed 2014/09/22 by Edythe Huffman. EAD finding aid created 2014/09/22 by Edythe Huffman.

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

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### **Corporate Name(s)**

- Conner Prairie Pioneer Settlement (Noblesville, Ind.).

### **Geographic Name(s)**

- Indiana Territory

### **Personal Name(s)**

- Captain Pipe, approximately 1725-1794
- Conner, John 1775-1826
- Conner, William 1777-1855

### **Subject(s)**

- Compensation
- Documents
- Indiana--History--War of 1812
- Travel